

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
XMT AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BISSAU
AMEMBASSY GABORONE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, MARCH 29, 1978

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S NOON BRIEFING . IF NECESSARY OFFICIAL VERSION WILL FOLLOW.

Q: I JUST WANT TO ASK IF YOU HAVE ANY REPORTS ON THE FIGHTING IN RHODESIA?

A: NO, NOTHING BEYOND WHAT WE HAVE SEEN AND YOU HAVE SEEN.

Q: DICK MOOSE'S MEETING WITH THE NIGERIAN CHARGE THIS MORNING -- DO YOU KNOW IF THE CASE OF MR. LEFEVRE, THAT AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN, WAS TAKEN UP?

A: YES, I THINK THAT IS GOING TO BE, OR WAS, ONE OF THE SUBJECTS, JIM.

Q: AND WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, ARE WE DOING WHEN WE TAKE IT UP WITH HIM?

A: WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT SPECIFICALLY WE ARE DOING. I THINK WE ARE OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO GET FURTHER INFORMATION

ABOUT THE CASE IN GENERAL BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU EXACTLY IN WHAT FRAMEWORK THEY DISCUSSED IT.

Q: ARE WE SATISFIED WITH THE EXPLANATIONS THAT WE HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

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HAD FROM THE NIGERIANS? DO WE AGREE THAT LEFEVRE IS BEING TREATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH DIPLOMATIC AND NIGERIAN LAW, PRACTICE?

A: WELL, OF COURSE, I CAN'T SPEAK TO WHAT TRANSPIRED BETWEEN THE NIGERIAN AND DICK MOOSE THIS MORNING ON THAT, BUT IN GENERAL, IT APPEARS THAT MR. LEFEVRE IS BEING EQUITABLY TREATED UNDER NIGERIAN LAW.

Q: AND IS IT THE SORT OF THING THAT COULD BECOME AN ISSUE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES -- PARTICULARLY DURING THE VISIT BY PRESIDENT CARTER?

A: WELL, AT THE MOMENT, WE DON'T SEE ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CASE AND THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT LATER IN THE WEEK. OUR CONCERN IS THAT AMERICANS WHO ARE DETAINED ABROAD ARE TREATED JUSTLY AND FAIRLY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE COUNTRY INVOLVED, THAT U.S. CONSULAR OFFICIALS BE NOTIFIED PROMPTLY AND THAT THESE OFFICIALS BE PERMITTED ACCESS TO PEOPLE THAT ARE AMERICAN CITIZENS, BEING HELD, UNDER THE VIENNA CONVENTION REGULATIONS.

Q: BUT, IN FACT, THE U.S. CONSUL IS NOT PERMITTED ACCESS?

A: NO, A U.S. CONSULAR OFFICIAL, PER SE, WAS NOT, BUT A U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIAL DID SEE HIM, HAS SEEN HIM. NOW I CAN'T EXPLAIN TO YOU WHY THAT IS, BUT THAT HAPPENS TO BE THE CASE.

Q: ARE WE PROTESTING OR OBJECTING TO THE LACK OF OFFICIAL CONSULAR ACCESS?

A: I DON'T KNOW THAT WE ARE PROTESTING. I DON'T BELIEVE THAT WE ARE.

THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT, APPARENTLY, DIDN'T OFFICIALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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NOTIFY THE EMBASSY OF THE DETENTION OF LEFEVRE AND A CONSULAR OFFICIAL, PER SE, WAS NOT PERMITTED TO SEE HIM, BUT AN EMBASSY OFFICIAL DID. AND ALSO, I THINK LEFEVRE'S SUCCESSOR, IN THE JOB THAT HE HOLDS THERE IN NIGERIA, HAS ALSO SEEN HIM.

Q: JOHN, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE MOOSE MISSION TO SOMALIA LAST WEEK?

A: FIRST, OUR EXCHANGES ON ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT WE TOOK UP IN THE MOOSE MISSION TO SOMALIA WERE PRELIMINARY EXCHANGES, AND I CAN'T GIVE YOU MUCH DETAIL ABOUT IT UNTIL WE HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM -- AND, OF COURSE, PRIOR TO THAT, WITHIN OUR OWN GOVERNMENT HERE.

HE HAD SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE AND WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER SOMALI OFFICIALS. THEY DISCUSSED BILATERAL ISSUES AND I THINK THAT OUR DELEGATION GOT A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CURRENT PROBLEMS THAT THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT IS FACING.

THE TRIP RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD AGREEMENT ON THE NATURE OF AN EXPANDED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND THE UNITED STATES.

OUR SIDE EXPRESSED PARTICULAR INTEREST IN SOMALI PLANS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN RELIEF. WE ALSO DISCUSSED POSSIBLE DEFENSE ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA -- ALWAYS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF OUR CONTINUING CONCERN FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN THE AREA AND OUR COMMITMENT TO THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ALL OF THE STATES IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD, INCLUDING UNCLASSIFIED

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SOMALIA.

Q: HAS A DECISION BEEN MADE WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION TO GIVE SOMALIA MILITARY AID?

A: NO, NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE AS FAR AS I AM AWARE YET.

Q: WHAT KIND OF A COMMITMENT OR NON-COMMITMENT DID MOOSE GIVE TO THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT ON THIS?

YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT "EXPANDED RELATIONSHIP". WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

A: WELL, THEY MADE PROGRESS, I THINK, IN DEFINING WHAT AN EXPANDED RELATIONSHIP MIGHT BE BUT THERE HAS CERTAINLY BEEN, AS FAR AS I KNOW, NO COMMITMENT NOR DECISION MADE TO PROVIDE THE SOMALIS WITH ANYTHING YET.

Q: YOU MEAN, BESIDES PL-480?

A: YES, RIGHT. I AM TALKING ABOUT DEFENSIVE MILITARY EQUIPMENT, THAT SORT OF THING.

Q: ARE THERE ANY PLANS TO IMMEDIATELY RECONVENE THE TALKS ON THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN WITH REPRESENTATIVES

OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT?

A: I DON'T KNOW OF ANY PLANS TO IMMEDIATELY RECONVENE IT. I THINK THE PROPOSAL FOR AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE IS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE AND WE ARE WORKING TOWARD THAT END. WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH MOST, IF NOT ALL THE PEOPLE INVOLVED.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING AT ALL THERE, THEN, REGARDING CUBAN PRESENCE ANYWHERE IN AFRICA, INCLUDING MOZAMBIQUE,
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THE HORN?

A: NO, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON MOZAMBIQUE, AND NOTHING NEW ON THE HORN. WE ARE STATIONARY ON THAT ONE, WHERE WE WERE THE LAST TIME WE TALKED ABOUT IT, AND IT IS SOMETHING THAT WE DO CHECK.

WE DO HAVE SOME CONFLICTING REPORTS ABOUT WHAT THE TOTAL CUBAN PRESENCE IS IN ETHIOPIA, AS I THINK YOU KNOW. I THINK THE LAST TIME WE SAID IT WAS 13,000 OR A LITTLE MORE.

Q: YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT'S CONTINUING TO RISE OR NOT?

A: I DON'T KNOW. WE HAVE CONFLICTING REPORTS AS TO WHETHER THAT IS CONTINUING TO GO UP. I REALLY CAN'T TELL YOU AT THE MOMENT.

Q: BUT THERE ARE NO REPORTS SUGGESTING IT HAS GONE DOWN?

A: I DON'T KNOW OF ANY. COOPER

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